

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 NEA-10 IO-13 SAJ-01 ACDA-07
OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OES-06 /096 W
-----171812 081589 /41

P R 171630Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3916

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

UMISSION NATO BRUSSELS 175

USUN NEW YORK 287

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 657

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS NATO GR TU SZ

SUBJ: AEGEAN NEGOTIATIONS AND CYPRUS

REF: ATHENS 1407, ANKARA 1072

BEGIN SUMMARY: TURKISH AMB BILGE GAVE ME HIS SLANT
TODAY ON THE RECENT CONTINENTAL SHELF TALKS IN LONDON. HE
ALSO RAISED THE CYPRUS QUESTION, AND SAID PROGRESS IN CYPRUS
WOULD GREATLY HELP THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS IN HIS OWN
TALKS. REGARDING FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE CONTINENTAL SHELF
TALKS, BILGE EXPRESSED GREATER OPTIMISM THAN HIS COLLEAGUES
IN ANKARA OR TZOUNIS IN ATHENS SEEM TO BE PROJECTING. WHEN
HE GETS DOWN TO THE DETAILS OF THE PROBABLY PARIS SCENARIO,
HOWEVER, A NUMBER OF COMPLICATIONS AND UNCERTAINTIES
EMERGE FROM HIS OWN DESCRIPTION. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH CAGLAYANGIL HAVING LEFT BERN YESTERDAY, I TOOK
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THE OCCASION TO GET BILGE'S VIEWS ON THE RECENT CONTINENTAL
SHELF TALKS IN LONDON. BILGE SEEMED TO WANT TO TALK ABOUT
CYPRUS FIRST, AND SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY MAKARIOS'
RECENT CHANGE OF POSITION. HE SAID THAT CYPRIOT ACCEPTANCE OF THE
IDEA OF A "COMMUNAL FEDERAL REPUBLIC"
WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO THE ABILITY OF
ALL PARTIES TO REACH A SOLUTION. ASSUMING THAT MAKARIOS

SHIFT IS NOT SIMPLY TACTICAL, BILGE PREDICTED THAT A SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND - EVEN THOUGH IT MAY TAKE SOME TIME.

2. BILGE GAVE ME A PRIMER-LECTURE ON THE MAKEUP OF THE BI-NATIONAL BALANCE ON THE ISLAND. HE SAID THAT POPULATION BALANCE SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS DETERMINING BECAUSE IT TENDED TO REFLECT THE POLITICS OF THE MOMENT. BILGE ASSERTED THAT HISTORICALLY THE TURKS HAD ONCE BEEN IN THE MAJORITY, THAT GREEK GOVERNANCE AND TURKISH INSECURITY HAD SERVED TO INCREASE THE PRO-GREEK IMBALANCE UNTIL RECENTLY, AND THAT NOW TURKS WERE COMING BACK AND GREEKS DEPARTING. BILGE POINTED OUT THAT THE HISTORIC FORMULA FOR PARLIAMENT, CIVIL SERVICE POSTS, ETC HAD BEEN 70-30 AND THAT THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE LAND DISTRIBUTION HAD BEEN 67.2 TO 32.8 (THE PEG FOR DENKTASH'S CURRENT PROPOSALS). BILGE NOTED THAT THE TURKS HAD ALREADY INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO RETREAT FROM THE PRESENT TERRITORIAL SPLIT TO 32.8 PERCENT; AND THAT THIS FIGURE WAS ALSO, AS DENKTASH HAD SAID, "NEGOTIABLE." BILGE SAID HE REALIZED THE EMPHASIS THE GREEKS PLACED ON TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENT, AND THE TURKS WOULD PRESS IN RETURN FOR BETTER FEDERAL ARRANGEMENTS - WHICH WOULD SAFEGUARD THE SECURITY AND RIGHTS OF THE TURKISH MINORITY. BILGE SOUGHT REASSURANCE, AS HE HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVT WOULD PLAY A BALANCE AND CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE AND WOULD NOT BE PARTISAN IN FAVOR OF THE GREEKS. I ALLUDED TO THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL ROLE IN THE PAST AND THE NAMING OF CLARE CLIFFORD AS OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE. I SAID THIS WAS PERHAPS CONFIDENTIAL

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THE BEST ASSURANCE THE TURKS COULD ASK FOR.

3. BILGE THEN TURNED TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF TALKS. HE WAS RESOLUTELY OPTIMISTIC. (HE HAS CONSISTENTLY TENDED TO PUT A GOOD FACE ON THINGS.) HE SAID BOTH GREEKS AND TURKS NOW DEFINITELY ACCEPT THE NEED TO WORK TOWARD A SOLUTION. HE BELIEVES THE DANGER OF A RUPTURE AND COMPLETE BREAKDOWN IS NOW BEHIND US.

4. BILGE ENVISAGES THE MARCH 15 RESUMPTION OF THE TALKS IN PARIS TO PRODUCE A CONTINUATION OF THE PROCESS BEGUN IN LONDON. BILGE NOTED HE WEARS TWO HATS: 1) POLITICAL NEGOTIATION WITH TZOUNIS (BOTH OF THEM SUPPORTING THEIR MINISTERS); AND 2) HEAD OF THE TURKISH TECHNICAL DELEGATION WHICH WILL LOOK INTO PRECEDENTS AROUND THE WORLD. BILGE EXPECTS THE TWO DELEGATIONS IN PARIS TO START WITH "MUTUALLY AGREED CASES." HE CLAIMS THAT TZOUNIS UNDERSTANDS THAT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CONFINE THESE STUDIES TO AGREEMENTS IN FORCE. HE

EXPRESSES THE CONVICTION THAT, WHEN IT COMES TO IT, THE GREEKS WILL NOT BLOCK CONSIDERATION OF OTHER CASES.

5. BILGE ENVISAGES THE TWO DELEGATIONS INITIATING STUDIES WHILE HE TALKS (NEGOTIATES) THE POLITICAL LEVEL WITH TZOUNIS. APPARENTLY HE DOES NOT ENVISAGE THE JOINT STUDIES PROCEEDING EXCEPT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF HIS AND TZOUNIS PRESENCE AND CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS. IN EXPLAINING THIS, HE ALLUDED AGAIN TO HIS OWN TWO-HATTED ROLE. I ASKED IF THE STUDY SESSION WOULD BE CONSTITUTED IN ANY FORMAL WAY AS "JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS." BILGE SAID THAT WOULD DEPEND ON HOW THINGS WENT.

6. SO FAR AS HIS AND TZOUNIS PRIVATE MEETINGS ARE CONCERNED, BILGE SEEMS READY TO REGARD THE CONVERSATIONS AS THEY ARE PROCEEDING AS "NEGOTIATIONS" IN AN INCIPIENT PHASE. HE POINTED OUT THAT HE AND TZOUNIS WERE FEELING OUT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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REAL NEGOTIATING POSITIONS ON THE OTHER SIDE - AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PUBLIC POSITIONS - AND WERE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. THE ONLY EXAMPLE OF PROGRESS BILGE GAVE, HOWEVER, WAS TZOUNIS PROMISE TO BRING A MAP AND TALK FROM IT WHEN THEY MET AGAIN IN MARCH.

7. BILGE NOTED THAT, WHILE TZOUNIS ASSERTED IN DELEGATION TALKS THAT HE HAD NO AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE, HE WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE FLEXIBLE WHEN HE AND BILGE TALKED IN PRIVATE. BILGE SAID HE WELL UNDERSTOOD TZOUNIS PROBLEM, BECAUSE THE GREEK POSITION RESTED ON THEIR ASSERTIONS OF RIGHT UNDER THE 1958 TREATY. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE GREEKS TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC OR EVEN OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THEY ARE "NEGOTIATING" ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL BECAUSE THIS IMPLIES A RETREAT FROM THEIR LEGAL STAND. SIMILARLY, THE GREEKS WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE JOINT COMMISSION STUDY THE AGREEMENTS IN FORCE, CONCLUDE THAT MOST OF THEM ACCEPTED THE MEDIAN LINE, AND PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THAT BASIS. BILGE SAYS THE 1958 TREATY IS UNDER ASSAULT OR IN DOUBT IN SO MANY PENDING CASES THAT ITS ACCEPTABILITY AS A LEGAL STANDARD CANNOT BE ASSUMED. HE ALSO NOTES THAT TURKEY DOES NOT ADHERE.

8. BILGE CONCLUDES BY EMPHASIZING THAT THE TALKS AND STUDIES TOGETHER MUST INFUSE AN ELEMENT OF FLEXIBILITY INTO THE PROBLEM, RATHER THAN PRODUCE A HARDENING OF POSITIONS. HE TALKS GENERALLY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ACCEPTING A MEDIAN LINE IN SOME PLACES AND SOMETHING ELSE IN OTHERS. HE ASSERTS, AS HE HAS BEFORE, THAT WHEN SOVEREIGN RIGHTS AND INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED, THERE IS INEVITABLY A POLITICAL ELEMENT IN THE DISPUTE.

9. ON THE QUESTION OF SEISMIC EXPLORATION (PARA 10 OF ATHENS 1407), BILGE'S REMARKS WERE REASSURING. HE GAVE NO IMPRESSION OF IMMINENT RESUMPTION OF EXPLORATION OR OF ANY TURKISH INTENTION TO THREATEN RESUMPTION AS A PRESSURE
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TACTIC. HE REMARKED THAT ONE COULD OBVIOUSLY NOT PURUSE NEGOTIATIONS SERIOUSLY AND HAVE AN ACTIVITY GOING ON WHICH INFLAMED THE ATMOSPHERE AND IMPEDED THEIR PROGRESS. (ANKARA CAN JUDGE TO WHAT DEGREE THIS REMARK REPRESENTS TURKEY'S REAL POSITION.)

10. LAST OF ALL, BILGE REVERTED TO THE CYPRUS ISSUE, POINTING OUT THAT THE COURSE OF THE TALKS ON CYPRUS WILL INFLUENCE THE CONTINENTAL SHELF TALKS. IF PROGRESS CAN BE MADE ON CYPRUS, THAT WILL GREATLY HELP THE CHANCES FOR PROGRESS IN BILGE'S OWN NEGOTIATIONS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW OF THE SEA, CONTINENTAL SHELF, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BERN00657
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770057-0405
Format: TEL
From: BERN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770233/aaaabdhx.tel
Line Count: 193
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c0d4a1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ATHENS 1407, 77 ANKARA 1072
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3301033
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AEGEAN NEGOTIATIONS AND CYPRUS
TAGS: PLOS, GR, TU, SZ, CY, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c0d4a1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009